

Message Text

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64

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8203

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AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMCONSUL OPORTO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, MZ

SUBJECT: ALLEGED MASSACRE IN MOZAMBIQUE

REF: LONDON 07924

1. SUMMARY: PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE AND MEDIA HAVE REACTED SHARPLY TO JULY 10 LONDON TIMES ARTICLE ALLEGING MASSACRES IN MOZAMBIQUE. THEY STRESS POLITICAL MOTIVATION OF ARTICLE, AND DEPLORE TIMES ACTION AS BREACH OF JOURNALISTIC ETHICS. AUTHOR HASTINGS IS SAID TO BE LONG TIME ANTI-PORTUGUESE ACTIVIST. END SUMMARY.

2. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS IN TIMES, SECRETARIAT OF STATE FOR INFORMATION ISSUED COMMUNIQUE APPEARING JULY 11 PRESS. COMMUNIQUE SAID SUPPORTERS OF LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN UK BEGAN MAKING MOVES WHEN 600TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS FIRST ANNOUNCED, AND HAVE ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGN TO COINCIDE WITH ARRIVAL OF PORTUGUESE PM. SAID THESE GROUPS HAVE GAINED LABOR PARTY SUPPORT AND PRESS SYMPATHY. COMMUNIQUE SAID ALLEGED GOP ATROCITIES ALREADY EXPLOITED IN OTHER EUROPEAN
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COUNTRIES, BUT THAT ALLEGATION BY PRO-FRELIMO PRIEST HAD

BEEN REFUTED PUBLICLY. WHEN ALLEGATIONS MADE IN PAST, SAID
MILITARY HQ MOZAMBIQUE HAD ALWAYS UNDERTAKEN VIGOROUS INQUIRY,
AND SHOWN
ACCUSATIONS TO BE UNFOUNDED. COMMUNIQUE SAID CURRENT
ALLEGATIONS WOULD BE INVESTIGATED DESPITE FACT THAT THEY
CLEARLY AIMED AT UNLEASHING SCANDAL ON EVE OF PM CAETANO'S
LONDON VISIT. COMMUNIQUE NOTED LOCALE OF MASSACRE, WIRIYAMU,
CANNOT BE FOUND ON MOZAMBIQUE MAPS.

3. PRESS ALSO CARRIED PORTUGUESE TRANSLATION OF
STATEMENT BY GOP EMBASSY LONDON CONDEMNING TIMES FOR LACK
OF JOURNALISTIC ETHICS AND FOR PUBLISHING HEARSAY ARTICLE
"BEFORE OBTAINING VERIFICATION FROM PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES".
EMBASSY FLATLY DENIED ALLEGATIONS.

4. OTHER PRESS ARTICLES APPEARING LISBON NOTED
OPPOSITION LEADER WILSON'S REQUEST IN COMMONS FOR EMERGENCY
DEBATE ON ALLEGED ATROCITIES AND FOR CANCELLATION OF CAETANO
VISIT, AND HEATH'S VIGOROUS REFUSAL. PRESS ALSO NOTES THAT
EXILED PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST LEADER MARIO SOARES, WHO NOW
IN LONDON AT INVITATION LABOR PARTY, WILL BE RECEIVED BY
WILSON AND IS TO GIVE PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 11. INTERVIEW
WITH CAETANO IS TO APPEAR ON UK TV JULY 12.

5. EDITORIAL REACTIONS IN JULY 11 PRESS PREDICTABLE
SHARP. ALL PAPERS CONDEMN TIMES AND AUTHOR ADRIAN HASTINGS,
SAYING ARTICLE AND EDITORIAL CLEARLY ORCHESTRATED TO
COINCIDE WITH PRIME MINISTER'S UK VISIT. ANGRIST COMMENTARY
WAS IN PRO-GOVERNMENT EPOCA, WHICH SHRILLY ACCUSED
INSURGENTS OF ATROCITIES AND CALLED ALLEGATIONS "LIES AND
CALUMNY".

6. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY LOCAL JOURNALIST THAT HASTINGS
IS WELL-KNOWN ANTI-PORTUGUESE ACTIVIST, AND HAS NEVER VISITED
PORTUGUESE AFRICA. ACCORDING JOURNALIST, HASTINGS HAS BEEN
WRITING AGAINST PORTUGAL SINCE 1952.

7. COMMENT: PRELIMINARY REACTION FROM UK EMBASSY
INDICATES HMG IS CONTINUING PREPARATIONS FOR VISIT, AND
EXPECTS THAT PRIME MINISTER'S TRIP WILL TAKE PLACE AS
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SCHEDULED. ALTHOUGH GOP WILL REACT BADLY TO PREACHING FROM
BRITISH PRESS, AT THIS JUNCTURE IT APPEARS PROBLEM IS NOT
LARGE ENOUGH TO CAUSE CANCELLATION OR POSTPONEMENT OF VISIT.
POST

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